

Remarks

Applicants would first like to express their appreciation to Examiner Donovan for a thorough examination. Claims 6-10 are pending in the present application. Claims 6-10 stand rejected. The following remarks are in response to the referenced paragraphs from the Office Action of June 30, 2003.

Paragraph 1

Applicants express their appreciation for the acknowledgement of the priority papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119.

Paragraph 2

The specification is amended to include the serial number and filing date of the related PCT application.

Paragraphs 3 and 4

Claims 6-10 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. The Office Action contends that the structure, as claimed, is unclear with respect to the slide acting on the opening spring contacts "at different spacing from the spacing at the base and from that at which it acts on the corresponding closing spring contacts."

Claim 6 has been amended to particularly point out and distinctly claim a relay having a slide "configured to act on the active spring contact of the pair of opening spring contacts at a different distance from the base than the distance from the base at which the slide acts on the

corresponding closing spring contact. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully contend that claim 6, as amended, is not indefinite.

Claim 7 has been amended consistent with claim 6. Claim 8 has been amended to replace "constructed" with --configured-- for clarity.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully contend that claims 7-10 are not indefinite.

Paragraphs 5 and 6

Claims 6-9 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Tsuji (U.S. Pat. No. 5,160,910) in view of Kirsch (U.S. Pat. No. 5,831,502). Applicants respectfully disagree. Claim 6 includes a feature which is neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references or any combination thereof, namely "the slide being configured to act on the active spring contact of the pair of opening spring contacts at a different distance from the base than the distance from the base at which the slide acts on the corresponding closing spring contact." The Office Action acknowledges that Tsuji does not disclose or suggest "the slide acting on the contacts at varying activation points." The Office Action, however contends that "Kirsch discloses a slide mechanism [figure 1] active in response to a drive means operating on contact sets at differing activation points." A careful reading of Kirsch will show that it is directed to a multi-component slide that can provide a varying slot width (see e.g., col. 6, lines 11-12). Thus, the different activation points of Kirsch are in the direction of the slide action (by varying the slot widths), and not at different distances from the base plane as claimed in claim 6. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully contend that claim 6, as amended is allowable over the cited references. Claims 7-9 depend from claim 6 and are allowable for the reasons that claim 6 is allowable.

Paragraph 7

Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Tsuji (U.S. Pat. No. 5,160,910) in view of Kirsch (U.S. Pat. No. 5,831,502), and in further view of Shibata et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,945,900). Claim 10 depends from claim 6 and are allowable for the reasons that claim 6 is allowable.

Newly added claims

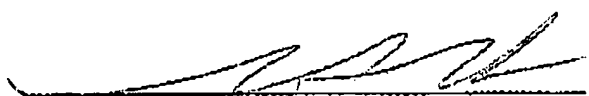
Newly added claims 11-13 are supported by the original application, for example, beginning at page 9, line 1; page 4, line 30; and page 5, line 32, respectively. No new matter has been added.

Conclusion

For all of the reasons provided above, Applicants contend that claims 6-13 are in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request entry of the foregoing amendment, re-examination of claims 6-10 and examination of newly added claims 11-13, allowance of claims 6-13, and issuance of Letters Patent for this invention.

Respectfully submitted,

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